

Scabies. Kenneth Mellanby. E. W. Classey Ltd., Hampton, Middlesex, G.B. 1972. 81 p. \$3.50.

This readable little volume is the second edition of this text; the first was issued in 1943 as part of the Oxford War Manual. In a very clear style it describes in ten chapters the parasitological and medical aspects of scabies, "the itch."

Chapter I, The Anatomy and Life History of the Itch Mite, identifies and describes the *Sarcoptes scabiei* var. *hominis* parasite and includes a very well written description of a technique of isolation of it from a skin burrow in order to provide the diagnosis. Chapter II, The Parasitology of Human Scabies, demonstrates the role of the ovigerous female in the pathogenesis of human scabies and the sarcoptic mange in animals. Chapter III, The Development of Symptoms, gives a very good description of the clinical manifestations of the disease, and it also emphasizes a less well known fact, that these signs are a result of sensitization and secondary infection following a relatively asymptomatic incubation period of several weeks. The initial asymptomatic burrows are practically impossible to diagnose in a clinical setup. Chapter IV, Secondary Pathological Conditions Induced by Scabies Infection, clearly points out the clinical problem of persisting secondary changes after eradication of the mite via adequate antiscarptic treatment. Failure to recognize this fact may easily lead to overtreatment with generally irritating antiscarptic agents, leading to further deterioration. Also, vice-versa, failure to recognize scabies may lead to unsuccessful treatment of secondary eczema or suppurative dermatitis. Chapter V, The Transmission of Scabies, shows that appreciation of this facet may contribute to interruption of the spread of infection with relative ease. The mite will die within 10 minutes at 50°C (120°F), and will not survive longer than 2 days in a drying cupboard (on garments). Also, ordinary processes of laundering are adequate to eradicate the parasite. Chapter VI, The Incidence of Scabies, provides the author's contribution via his interesting hypothesis (and documentation) on the role of sensitization and immunology in the 20 to 25-year cycle of recurrent peak incidence of the disease. From this standpoint the occurrence of World War II during the last epidemic of scabies was coincidental and not causative. This would also explain the current increase of the disease in Great Britain. Chapter VII, The Prevention of Scabies, centers around (a) individual and (b) public health aspects. It is of interest to note that contrary to common thinking the author maintains that washing (hygiene) does not prevent scabies, does not remove burrowed mites, and may even be detrimental: "If the cuticle is filthy it may offer a less favorable harborage to the parasite." Chapter VIII, The Treatment of Scabies, is divided into two parts: (a) The Treatment of Parasitic Infection with sulfur or benzyl benzoate interestingly is as up-to-date in 1973 as it was in 1943. Several other modalities of treatment quoted in the text are today of no more than historic significance. A second part, (b), of this chapter, The Treatment of Secondary Infection, is completely outdated. It should have been either updated or simply omitted. As published in this otherwise authoritative text it may easily convey wrong impressions and mislead an uninformed (i.e., non-M.D.) reader. Chapter IX, Conditions Which May Be Confused with Scabies, enumerates several disorders to be considered in differential diagnosis but lacks the precision and clarity of previous chapters. It may be interesting to quote the author in mentioning pediculosis corporis in differential diagnosis, that is, that "a lousy individual not infrequently has scabies as well," or, regarding pediculosis capitis, "a high proportion of female scabies patients have lousy heads" (page 66). Chapter X describes very briefly (with adequate illustrative drawings), eight other mites of medical and veterinary importance (order Acarina).

The Appendix is of historical interest. It provides recipes to prepare (1) Berlese's fluid (serves to "mount mites and pieces of tissue containing burrows" for microscopic study), and (2) benzyl benzoate emulsion for treatment of the itch.

A three-page index completing this volume is adequate.

This volume provides a multitude of interesting data usually not found in standard medical texts. The timeliness of this second edition is illustrated by the recent increase of scabies in Great Britain and parasitic diseases elsewhere, including New York State (case of tick paralysis on Long Island). Thus, this book will be a valuable addition to university and college libraries, especially medical and veterinary schools, and will be of value to public health officers, school physicians and nurses, military physicians, parasitologists, and veterinarians.

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An Index to the Described Life Histories, Early Stages and Hosts of the Macrolepidoptera of the Continental United States and Canada. Harrison Morton Tietz. Published by A. C. Allyn for the Allyn Museum of Entomology, iv + 1042 pp., in 2 vols., obtainable only from Entomological Reprint Specialists, Los Angeles, California, 90007. \$25.00.

The last catalog of the early stages of North American Lepidoptera was that of Henry Edwards, published in 1889. Although quite complete, it contained only 147 pages. Subsequently Davenport and Dethier (1938) and Dethier (1946) published lists of references to the butterflies. Obviously there has long been a serious need for an up-to-date catalog, especially because of the enormous amount of information published in recent years. This index prepared by Tietz will do much to fill this need. However, it covers the literature only through about 1950, so that the last 22 years have not been indexed. It also omits the microlepidoptera, but even so will prove an invaluable reference to anybody interested in almost any phase of work on the butterflies and macromoths. It is quite complete (although a couple of omissions were found in a casual check). In preparing it the author consulted 226 periodicals and 127 separate works, which are listed. The nomenclature is that of McDunnough's 1938 Checklist; this is now quite outdated in many groups but, as the most recent complete list, gives a definitive standard. The plant nomenclature follows that of Gray's Manual (Fernald, 1950), also somewhat outdated, but at least a consistent point of reference.

The chief section deals with the Lepidoptera covered, arranged alphabetically by species (and with their families cited) and thus placeable by the McDunnough index. The listing is of specific names treated as valid by McDunnough, but all other species-group names listed by McDunnough, including those placed in synonymy, and all infrasubspecific names, are included in this index and cross-referenced to the valid names. There is also a listing by common names, cross-referenced to the scientific names. These do not necessarily correspond to the common names of the "official" list of the Entomological Society of America, but they do correspond with general popular usage.

Taken all together, one can begin with either the scientific or common name of a species and find references to the host plants from which it has been recorded; or can begin with either the scientific name of a plant or a group of plants (e.g., pines) and find references to the macrolepidoptera that have been recorded on it. In both ways this index can and will be of great service, and is certainly a must for all serious workers, as well as for naturalists. It is a pity that it ends just at about the date when a great outburst of life history work began; but doubtless the period after 1952 will eventually be covered in similar fashion.

The author attempts to deal with the two chief troubles that bedevil all workers, namely